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FROM A BOOK FUND COMMEMORATING
RUTH GERALDINE ASHEN
CLASS OF 1931

It's a sad thing
  when a man is to be so soon forgotten
And the shining in his soul
  gone from the earth
With no thing remaining;

And it's a sad thing
  when a man shall die
And forget love
  which is the shiningness of life;

But it's a sadder thing
  that a man shall forget love
And he not dead but walking in the field
  of a May morning
And listening to the voice of the thrush.

—R.G.A., in *A Yearbook of Stanford Writing*, 1931

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LONDON: PRINTED BY
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FRA ANGELICO

AND

OTHER SHORT POEMS.

BY

I. G. S.

LONDON:
LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
1872.

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PREFACE.

FALLS on the sand, and dies the foam
  In act of falling, where the wave
Has cast it, while the waters roam
  Another shore to lave.

Foam-like yon blossom falls and dies,
  Frail nursling of the budding year,
While others under fostering skies
  Bloom brightly far and near.

Like foam or blossom many a thought
  Bursts into being but to die;
Not vainly, if thereby is wrought
  Joy to one passer-by.

FRA ANGELICO DA FIESOLE.

SAY, ye hoary saints and martyrs, gazing down from
frescoed walls,
When around your brows the sunset glory lingeringly
falls;
Say to us who surge around you like a stream which
frets and flows,
Whence this strange repose?

Even unto us are given purple gleams at times from
heaven,
Flushing all the pallid olives with a sweet and solemn
hue;
But it fades, and we are sighing for the rapture
fading, dying—
Was it ever so with you?

Flashed no look of longing ever from your half-reverted eyes
Earthward, e'en amid your visions of the bliss of Paradise?
Swept no gust of passion ever rudely o'er the level line
Of your calm divine?

Seemed it not at times a madness thus to barter present gladness,
All the pride and pomp of living for a thing unseen, unknown?
As ye knelt before the altar did your prayers not ever falter
Ere they reached God's throne?

Haply, ye amid the troublous waking from delusive dreams
Slaked the fire within by draughts of Helicon's pellucid streams,
Or by converse with the planets nightly marching on their way,
Grew serene as they?

Or in philosophic wonder, haply ye have loved to ponder,
How the world of things without us is a phantom flitting by,
While ideal forms of being far above our range of seeing
Sit enthroned on high?

Lo! your glance of grave compassion thrills me with a silent awe,
And your wasted fingers softly beckon me more near to draw,
And ye answer, 'We will tell thee of the secret and the way,
If thou wilt *obey*.

'For that one short word enshrineth all that mortal wit divineth,
How to win strength out of weakness, out of sorrow fearless joy.
Take the yoke and daily wear it; 'tis to those who bravely bear it
Rest without alloy.

'To obey, e'en though obeying rives well-nigh the heart in twain,
To obey, though eye nor lip may bear its witness to the pain,
Though the reason be withholden for obeying, to obey
Straight without delay.

'This, and this alone is able, stills the longing; for unstable
Is the spirit as the needle trembles till it find the pole:
Once thy will with God's is blended, then at last the strife is ended
Raging in thy soul.

'When the rebel passions hearken to the voice within the soul,
Chanting ever loud or low the strain to which the planets roll,
When the spirit which they bow to bows itself to One above,
Then is peace and love.

'So the ocean stills its raging, when it feels the touch assuaging
Of the angel gliding o'er its billows with unruffled wing;
So the wind, out-worn with roaming, sinks to slumber in the gloaming
Of an eve in spring.

'We have seen the Holy Infant bending from his mother's arms,
With a smile for those who triumph o'er the world and all its charms,
With a glance which says to mortals, vainly troubled and distrest—
"I will give you rest."

'Can an Infant thus be giving that for which the wisest living,
With a hope well-nigh despairing, wait and watch and toil in vain?
Nay, He answers, "O! believe it, this my promise and receive it,
It shall be your gain."

'Mary and her Child are with us, and the dark dank cell grows bright,
As a dim sepulchral cavern flooded with the noonday light;
And across the flinty desert comes a sweet and strange perfume,
As when roses bloom.

'For the desert is not lonely, is not bleak and bare, if only
Chanting angels round the cradle of the Child Christ fold their wings;
Glows the cell with pearls and amber when it is the presence chamber
Of the King of kings.

'Yet 'tis not for this we serve Him, for the gifts His hand bestows,
But that from His eye is beaming deeper love than mortal knows,
But that o'er His brow the shadow, e'en in infancy, is cast,
Of the Cross at last.

'Therefore we to Him would tender all the love
which we can render,
And the badge of our allegiance to Him is this holy
palm;
With His banner floating o'er us, sin and sorrow
flee before us,
And the heart is calm."

THE ANGELS' BRIDGE.

Two Angels stood on two far-sundered shores,
From adamantine watch-towers gazing down,
Where through the cleft abyss the torrent roars.

A rainbow arched its glories overhead,
Spanning the spaces of the sky above,
Spanning below the chasm dark and dread.

Morn reigned triumphant in her cloudless east;
The glimmering moon passed silently away,
From cares of nightly regency released.

The woods, that robed the rocks on either side
From crest to wave-washed base, were all ablaze,
Fired by the torch which summer dropped—and
died.

They twain, with wings half furled, with heads unbowed,
Stretched each a hand across the darkling void
Fast locked in grasp of love, and cried aloud:

'Fade, fade, O Moon, unmurmuring away,
Like a remembrance that is laid to rest,
Yet dies not, at the coming of the day.

'Flash back, O Earth, thy brightest smiles to Heaven,
Whose beam alone first kindled them in thee,
In love repaying what in love was given.

'Rush, waters, down, impatient to be free,
Past rocks that thrust their bulk athwart your speed,
Down to the great illimitable sea.

'So fades what is before what is to be;
So, while they last, the joys of earth are bright;
So sweeps man's spirit to eternity.

'But we the while, with foot that falters not,
Thus pedestalled upon the dizzy brink,
Stand watchful at the post which is our lot:

'To build a way across the depth below,
As springs from verge to verge yon radiant arch,
That men may pass securely to and fro.

'For love can bridge the gulf of hate and fear,
That severs race from race and man from man,
Channelled and scooped by dint of many a year.

'Love spans the gulf between the few who have
And those who hunger having not, nor know
How little profits that for which they crave.

'Here tinselled pride, there rebel murmurings
Have riven asunder ancient brotherhood;
But love draws near the people and their kings.

'Love binds the present and the past in one,
This calm and grave as hoary age, and that
Ardent as youth to dare what none has done.

'Love is the bridge, whereby whoe'er has strayed
From that one fold, whose Shepherd is the Lord,
May homeward turn to rest beneath its shade.

'Nay, love can heal the strife that rages high
Between man's nobler and his lower self,
As God in Christ has linked the earth and sky.

'O pioneers of Him who comes again,
See that ye bridge the chasm bravely o'er,
That yawns amid the hearts and homes of men.'

The vision fades; the clear seraphic strains
Die like the breathings of a wind-swept lyre:
Only a bridge across a stream remains.

BRIDE OF THE SUN.

THE sweet springtime is a maiden fair—
The tender bloom of a glad surprise
Flushes her cheek and her azure eyes;
But soon the fringe of her eyelids meek
Droopingly shades her pensive cheek;
Her fairy footfall scarcely shakes
The violet-bud that beneath it wakes;
And a vagrant waft of scented air
Dimples the flow of her golden hair.

The sweet springtime is coy as sweet—
Anon she turns her lips away
To 'scape the sun's tempestuous ray;

And anon she answers maidenly,
With lifted veil and glances shy,
With gleams that vanish as they come,
Chased by a momentary gloom;
Half-fearing, longing half to greet
His presence with avowal meet.

Wayward is she as fits her years—
She loves, but will not own her love;
And, as her veering fancies move,
Gives gaily back or smile or frown
To him who gazes fondly down;
She veils herself in a cloud, that he
May love the more whom he may not see;
But he darts a ray through the cloud, nor fears
Lest love like his be quenched in tears.

For every hour she has a mood—
Her laugh is ringing, blithe and clear,
Where silvery waters sparkle near,

Through the hazel copse, where the dancing breeze
Twirls the tassels that plume the trees;
But soon she weeps in her roofless bower
With plaintive wail and tearful shower;
Till, calling softly through the wood,
The thrushes soothe her solitude.

The sweet springtime is a winsome bride—
Around her taper throat are hung
The pearly dewdrops deftly strung;
Like a purfled scarf on her shoulders glow
The sevenfold tints of her sun-wrought bow:
She has robed her in the unsullied green
That best befits a woodland queen;
But amid her smiles at times has sighed
For her aged sire's deserted side.

She sighs at times for the days gone by—
For the bygone joys of the icy hall
Where winter holds his festival;

And her youthful fancies to and fro
Shift at will, as breezes blow :
But her heart the while is fixed and true
As under a cloud the changeless blue ;
And love like hers 'neath summer's sky
Shall ripen, never again to die.

APHRODITE.

One more in the eddy—one more, young and brave,
  Drawn down to the depths—yet the wave
Unsated, as who drains the goblet, and then
  Cries 'Let it be plenished again!'
A gasp of despair from the sea to the shore;
  And now all is still as before.

But she the fair goddess, upborne in her shell
  From depths where the sea-monsters dwell,
Light floating as foam o'er the turmoil and whirl
  Where the waters remorselessly swirl,
Laughs softly and pauses awhile to espy
  Her votaries struggle and die.

Laughs softly and mirrors herself in the wave
  Now silent and still as a grave,
Where gleam the white shoulders bejewelled with
    spray,
  And the tresses in sweet disarray,
Where gleams from her eyes an unquenchable fire.
  O queen! what has kindled thine ire?

She speaks. Is there aught of reproof in her tone
  For the deed which the whirlpool has done?
Of grief for the doom of the young and the brave
  Ill matched with the treacherous wave?
Nay, it is but to mock with her laughter the cry
  And the anguish of souls as they die.

'Ah! Fool, to be lured by a glance and a smile
  Which none but a fool could beguile,
By a languishing look and a beckoning hand,
  Far away from thy home and thy land,
Till the smile and the whisper have lured thee away
  Where the deep is awaiting his prey.

'Blue lakes where the mountains eternally keep
Their watch o'er the waves as they sleep,
Broad rivers which bask in the valleys, and rills
Which sparkle and dance through the hills;
All these, in thy blindness of homage for me,
Thou hast left for the treacherous sea.'

O Paphian, falser than fair! There is death
In the poison-perfume of thy breath.
On thy soft snowy hand is a stain not of wine
From the victims who bleed at thy shrine.
Alas for the mortal who sees not the guile
Which lurks in thy pitiless smile!

HOPE.

THE western wind comes piping shrill
Athwart the copse and round the hill;
And a sudden dimness chills the ray
That danced along our way.

On the silent moorland falls amain
The plash of the dull relentless rain,
As fall the accents sad and slow,
The harbingers of woe.

The dripping boulders here and there
Fling it back from their surface bare,
Like stubborn hearts, which will not hear
The tidings that they fear.

Yon distant plains, that were aglow
With hope and joy awhile ago,
Now glimmer as a spectre grey,
Seen as it fades away.

O! comrades, not for ever last
These skies with sorrow overcast—
O! comrades, nature is more fair
For this her brief despair.

The doubt, the cavil, the mistrust,
The dread by which the soul is crushed,
Pass, as a passing cloud, away
When truth unveils her ray.

UNDINE.

I SAW Undine through mosses green
  Daintily wend her way,
O'er the moorland wild like a tripping child
  Who tarries not to play.
For amid the ferns her spirit yearns
  For undiscovered joys,
And with scarce a sigh she hastens by
  As a maiden quits her toys.

Oh! who can know as the waters flow,
  Which way their course shall be?
Is it not a quest of vain unrest
  Although commenced in glee?

With caresses soft she pauses oft
By the grey old boulderstone,
Ere she dares to spring as on poisèd wing
Down the depths unseen, unknown.

Then strong in love, from the verge above
She leaps, for life or death,
Nor quails at the shock of the giant rock
Which bars her way beneath.
A cloud of spray half veils the fray,
Like smoke from a battle-plain;
But loud and clear o'er the tumult drear
Swells hope's undying strain.

For a sunbeam stray has found its way
To the crag with sweetest wiles,
And a blue-eyed flower in the darkest hour
Leans over the brink and smiles;

While amid the toil and the strange turmoil
  And the whirl of raging foam,
One purpose still, through good and ill,
  Pilots the wanderer home.

Out of weakness strong, by conflict long,
  With passions manifold,
Without dismay at the long delay,
  She paces, not as of old,
Through vales that lie 'neath a stormless sky,
  With stately course and free,
Till a distant roar on the sounding shore
  Gives welcome to the sea.

ON THE SHORE

How calm he lies and still!
The sea, who slew him, laid him here,
Along the shingle bleak and bare,
With wild caresses, in despair
For having wrought her will:

With deep remorseful moan
In every wave that smites the strand,
Like theirs who rear a frantic hand
To heaven the while aghast they stand
At what themselves have done.

'Twas but an hour ago,
The crested billows in their pride
His stripling energies defied,
And choked the anguished gasp that cried
For rescue from his foe.

Too late repentant now,
Sad Ocean bids each sullen wave
Mutter its requiem o'er the brave,
And with unheeded sobbings lave
Cold cheek and pallid brow.

None but the hoarse sea-wave
Tells how amid the breakers tost,
By fate's resistless current crost,
His own bright life he gaged and lost
In vain a friend to save:

[illegible]

[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
With [illegible] [illegible] brow.

So lies he calm and still.
Unearthly gleams across the bay
Stream o'er him with the sun's last ray,
And whispered greetings far away
The cloudless azure thrill.

CREVOLA.

THERE is a place, whoso has ever trod
The Simplon's snow-capt summit knows it well,
Wrings tear-drops from the heart; tears not of pain,
But of a joy awestricken at itself.
You cross the bridge; the clattering jingling team
Scared by their master's shout and crackling thong
Prick up their drooping ears. But O! my friends,
Is it that we have passed all unaware
The gates of death, and thus and here awake
Amid the balmy airs of Paradise?
The bleak and barren mountains are behind,
The torrent roaring from his rocky lair,
The avalanche swift swooping on his prey,

The toppling crag, and all the shapes of fear
Which haunt in winter's mists that toilsome way:
Before us lies a valley flushed with joy.
Alas! It is not so. That crouching gait,
That vacant stare, or scarce less vacant scowl,
Are not of Eden; nor these tokens dire
Of havoc which the frenzied floods have made.
Is there no place where sorrow cannot come?

DOMO D'OSSOLA. *November*, 1868.

BEATRICE.

I KNOW not, I, thy story. If thy face
Tells truth I would not know. For in thine eyes
Unutterable sorrow darkens so
The light of youth, that as we gaze and gaze
We know not whether we the more admire
Thy beauty, or compassionate thy woe.
In truth thy loveliness is lovelier
This shadow resting on it; and thy woe
Wounds us the more because thou art so fair.

For thine is beauty, not alone of lines
Daintily drawn and alabaster skin,
But of a spirit breathing through all these
And blending all in one. Thy wistful eyes,

Tenderly loving as a little child's,
Yet with a depth of strange intelligence,
Whence have they learned this horror of despair,
As when a fledgling feels the hunter's toils
Close, close around, yet is too scared to stir
A wing, and only bends its glossy neck
Half round, and makes its mute appeal in vain ?

But see, thy lips are parted, rosy lips
Shaped as the bow from which the shafts are sped
Of woman's sweetest pleadings. Do they cry
Aloud for mercy ? Nay, there is no sound ;
Or but at most a moaning faint and low
As when a dreamer from some nameless dread
Recoils awaking. Is it then a dream
This dungeon and the headsman standing by ?

In days now past thy girlish laughter oft
Rippled along the corridors and made
Their silence music, and thy girlish tread,

Lute in thy hand or falcon on thy wrist,
Danced o'er the marbles of thy father's hall
(Why steals a shudder o'er thee at that name?)
Like springtime on the mountains. Where is fled
Thy sunshine and thy bird-like carollings,
Where the rich promise of thy ripening years?

The poet sings, 'Alas for happiness
Remembered!' Nay, alas and thrice alas,
Rather, for happiness that might have been!
For that was once, but this can never be.
The lyre lies shattered, and there lingers yet
The sweetness of its strains; but who shall say
What unimagined sweetness might have been,
But for the ruthless hand which snapped the strings?

I know not, I, thy tale, nor ask to know.
But this I know that there is peace at last
For souls which by constraint of circumstance
Rather than by consent have lost the bliss

Of innocence: not so, as if a man
Were slave of alien forces, and his will
Only a weathercock to show which way
Each veering passion drives him; yet there are
Whose sorrow, nay, whose sin, is from without
More than within. Woe, woe to him who dared,
The man or demon in disguise of man,
To taint the crystal fount within thy breast!
For him 'twere better never to have been.
So speaks the voice unerring. But for thee
May God have mercy on thy sweet sad soul!

ROMA.

O! GREAT Enchantress, I have felt thy spell
At last. I boasted that the dewy grace
Of English lawn for me and English dell
Were paramount. Now, turning from thy face,
I own thee peerless. As of old, thy smile
Is queenly; and this glowing April sky
Flushes thy faded cheek; and thou the while
Art silent, as disdaining to reply
To those who scan thy ruin. O! methinks
There is a witchery in the cup which thou
Art placing to my lip; and he who drinks
Of Trevi's plashing waters as they flow
And sparkle in the moonbeam, drinks, O Rome,
Forgetfulness of life, of self, of home.

CHRISTMAS DAY IN ROME.

THE Prince of Peace—it is His festal day.
But hark! the cannon from yon dungeon tomb
Scaring the sunrise with their sullen boom,
These cannot be for Him; nor this display
Of motley warriors, which bars the way
Here, even here, within the temple's wall
With clang of arms and din unmusical
Of hoarse command; nor yet this long array
Of courtiers doing homage; and, behold,
Borne by stout lackeys, while the prostrate throng
Are gaping at the crimson and the gold,
His brow begirt with regal diadem,
The priest-king. Nay, to him these pomps belong,
Not to the Babe cradled in Bethlehem.

THE DYING GLADIATOR.

It was no Roman hand which traced, I ween,
These flowing lines, and on that warrior's brow
So tenderly portrayed the strife between
Contempt of death and grief to lie so low.
What Roman in his pride and pomp of power
Wasted a thought upon a prostrate slave
Dragged from his home beside the Iser's wave
To die that Rome might while away an hour?
Surely some captive with the suppleness
Of Athens in his fingers found this way
His sympathising sadness to express,
His execration of a brutal sway.
Rome! thou art prostrate in thy turn. How long
Tarries thine Alaric to avenge thy wrong?

IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM

Oh! [illegible] to weary eyes, and ears, and feet—
Feet bruised and bleeding with life's flinty ways—
Eyes wildered with its labyrinthine maze—
Ears stunned, as when the surging waters meet,
By roar of voices and the joyless strife
For power, and place, and gold. Here evermore
Along the serried shelves from roof to floor
Mute monitors inspire a wiser life.
But, hist! I seem to hear the soft footfall
Of dark-robed padri gliding to and fro
Along Italian corridors—and lo!
By hands unseen this huge funereal pall
Of fog is lifted, and beyond it lies
The glory and the joy of southern skies.

ST. PAUL AT SEA.

I MUST see Rome. Far, far away are glowing
  Her porticoes against the western sky;
Yet loud as of a tide beside me flowing
    Breaks on my ear her cry;
  The shout of those who feast and buy,
    The wail for those who die.

The captive in Mamertine dungeon pining
  Dreams not that one is near to set him free;
The Cæsar groans on Tyrian couch reclining
    In worse captivity;
  Cæsar and slave alike must be
    Unmanacled by me.

Said I, by me? [illegible] be the word unspoken!
For what is Paul, or what can Paul avail,
Without His aid by whom, repelled and broken,
The ranks of darkness quail?
The waves are rough—my bark is frail—
[illegible] Christ, speed Thou my sail!

Teach this too eager heart the steadfast daring
Which falters not though friendless and alone,
That I may stand with no unseemly bearing
Before the Caesar's throne;
And teach these quivering lips the tone
Thou canst inspire alone.

The powers of darkness, poised on murky pinion,
Brood o'er the city which, supreme and sole,
Among the nations stretches her dominion
Wide as the waters roll;
The queenly city bends her soul
Slave to their fell control.

Along the banks of that famed stream which renders
  Its yellow tribute to the midland sea,
I see a motley multitude which tenders
    Its vain idolatry—
  To what? Behold! they bend the knee
    To their own fantasy.

For what is Zeus or Hera but the creature
  Of man's worst passions in their darkest hour,
Obliterated each diviner feature,
    Left only lawless power?—
  Poor helpers, when the storm-clouds lower
    Over the festive bower.

And the philosopher, the vulgar scorning,
  Wrapt in the mantle of his self-esteem,
Muses apart, nor knows that with the morning
    Fades into air his dream,—
  The morning, when the living beam
    Illumes his darkling theme.

Soon dawns the day. Soon, soon, the light prevailing
Over the phantoms of the night which loom
Dilated in the twilight, sends them wailing
Back to their kindred gloom—
Proud city, soon the crash of doom
Shall make thy walls thy tomb.

I must see Rome! I hear a voice which calls me,
The voice which once restrained my frenzied way
Across the Syrian plain. Whate'er befalls me
I may not, must not stay—
Come shame, come sorrow, come what may,
Christ calls, and I obey.

Rome, 1869.

J. K.

In slow procession, one by one,
The mourners to thy grave are gone,
Bearing their chaplets. I the last
Here on thy mound my offering cast;
Nor, slight and simple though it be,
Is it for that disdained by thee.
Lowly, methinks, may be the line
Which speaks of lowliness like thine.

For thou wert lowly. Though thy place,
So far as eye of man may trace,
Where mortal gaze enraptured faints,
Is high among the highest saints;

[illegible]

In [illegible] beside the [illegible] walls
Where the [illegible] sunlight [illegible] falls:
In [illegible] where sweet nameless rills
Wander among the western hills:

In work or rest, in joy or woe,
In peril from the viewless foe,
The heavenly music of thy lay
Wove its bright spell around my way.

O ! Poet, whose seraphic lyre
Ne'er quivered to a base desire,
Nor to the wild discordant cry
Of passion's frantic ecstasy,
But ever shed abroad a sense
Of truth and peace and innocence,
Training the restless heart to twine
Its tendrils round the life divine ;—

O ! Sage, whose wisdom calm and clear
Whispered to all who paused to hear,
'On, through the glimmering twilight grey,
Onward, where duty points the way ;'

Still to thy Church and country true,
Nor veering as the breezes blew;
By patience schooled to lead—for they
Can best command, who best obey;—

O! Christian, not austerely good,
Nor soured by pharisaic mood;
Stern to thyself, to others mild,
With children sportive as a child;
Abhorring sin, yet not the less
Compassionating sin's distress;
Taught by the Cross, what wonders lie
In love's mysterious harmony;—

The may-thorn dons her bridal wreath,
May-winds their freshening odours breathe;
Thrilled with new life all things upraise
Their swelling symphony of praise;—

We miss the voice from which to learn
How best to welcome spring's return;
But who shall say what strains arise
Amid the choirs of Paradise?

SISTERS OF MERCY.

THE snow that came a se'nnight past
  Lies now forlorn and soiled,
As when the shining harvest plain
  By ruthless hordes is spoiled.

The spotless robe is stained and torn
  Which gleamed on field and grove,
The robe of pure celestial sheen
  Which unseen fingers wove.

Beneath the sun's reproachful eye
  Its beauty wanes away,
And every passing breeze may flout
  Its lustreless decay.

But, lo, again the angels ply
  Their ceaseless task of love;
Again a robe from heaven's own woof
  Is wafted from above.

Pure as at first and fair as then
  The glistering flakes descend:
And softly with their sisters' shame
  Their innocency blend.

So loving spirits weave anew
  The robe that sin has riven,
For souls once pure as they, but now
  Outcasts forlorn from heaven.

L'ANGE DÉCHU.

O POET, O lord of the passions which rage
  In the breasts which they claim as their own,
Whose word was a sceptre the storm to assuage,
  Why hast thou forsaken thy throne?
To be loudest and fiercest of all in the din
  In the revel of folly and sin?

The winds were thy trumpet. So piercingly rang
  Its voice, that a shuddering went
Through the heart of the mountains, and lo! at its clang
  Their ancient foundations were rent;
Yet amid the wild prelude an undersong stole,
  Of hope and of peace on the soul.

Thine eye from the stars drew its glances of fire,
  Its flashes of joy pure and high;
Thine ear, thine alone, caught the tones of the lyre,
  Which they smite as they sweep through the sky;
All this like the gold of the spendthrift is gone.
  Alas! thou art reft of thy throne.

And for what? To be chief in the chorus of slaves
  Who drain the enchantress' bowl:
High priest in her orgy whenever she waves
  The wand of her ruthless control.
For a banquet which reeks of the garbage of earth
  Thou hast bartered the pride of thy birth.

No voice was as thine in the pæan which soared
  With the lark from the dew of the morn;
None sweeter, none stronger than thine ever poured
  The lay of its rapturous scorn,
When the legions of darkness fled trooping away
  From the glittering shafts of the day.

O poet, O lord of the passions which cry
  For rest in the bosoms of men,
Long lost, O return to thy vassals who sigh
  For the sway of thy sceptre again.
As at first so at last let thy minstrelsy roll
  A message of peace o'er the soul.

FOR MUSIC.

Oh say not they are past and gone,
The sunny days of youth gone past recalling,
Like withered leaves in yellow autumn falling;
Though treasured in my heart alone,
It cannot be that they are gone.

I hear the voices that are gone;
Though faint and far away the sound is dying,
Yet in my heart an echo is replying;
Though audible to me alone,
Oh say not they are past and gone.

J. L.

THE autumnal sun sinks calmly to his rest,
In glory drest,
Then, while we gaze, with undiminished ray
Passes away;
And yet we marvel not that he is gone;
His work of love is done.

Nor mourn we when the harvestmen go forth
From south to north,
Where the ripe sheaf among its fellows stands
Waiting their hands,
To lay it safe at last within the store
Where tempests rage no more.

Yet, now that he is taken from our eyes,
Now most we prize
The placid wisdom of the good old man,
Whose lengthened span
Of life seems all too short, if we would prove
Its measure by our love.

We miss the kindly voice which stilled the strife
When storms were rife;
The bounteous heart, wherein was room for all
Or great or small;
The cheerful heart, which toiled serenely on
Until its task was done.

And most, amid the wild anarchic ways
Of these our days,
We miss the sway paternal of the hand,
Whose mild command
Could moderate from aberration strange
The lawless lust of change.

O loved, revered, grey head, unbowed by years
Or selfish fears!
Chief Pastor true! Thy lifelong toil at last
Sleeps with the past.
Who but would wish with toils like thine to vie,
And then like thee to die?

FOAM-FLAKES.

THE oar dints the water, the boat glides along
  Full freighted with beauty and song;
And the ripple of sunshine, and laughter, and glee
  Floats with it far over the sea;
But the foam-flakes, which fell from your oars in the
    spray,
  O whither, gone whither are they?

Borne back by the pitiless force of the tide,
  Fast drifting away from your side,
Borne back to yon grim and implacable rock,
  And shivered to air in the shock,
Or fading by slow evanescent degrees,
  What matter? Ye follow the breeze.

Nay, the breeze follows you, and, at least for a while,
'Tis enough that ye bask in the smile
Of the sun in his strength, and may wander at will
While the waters your bidding fulfil
Like a slave; and why need ye be straining your eyes
To watch how a foam-bubble dies?

Ye have wealth and all pleasure which wealth can devise,
Ye have won and are wearing your prize;
What need to trace backward your glistening wake
To watch how the foam-bubbles break,
How hearts once beloved, now forsaken, forlorn,
Swiftly back to destruction are borne?

O cruel! E'en now 'mid the laughter and song
Which waft you so gaily along,
I hear far behind on your track the low wail,
Loud swelling anon in the gale;
Swift and sure the avenger sweeps down on the pride
Which the pleadings of mercy defied.

KING ARTHUR'S TWELVE WISHES.

STRONG be my arm nor faltering, where
Thy voice, O Lord, shall bid me dare;
Keen as my falchion be my sight
To wield its lightnings for the right;
And may my shield a barrier make
Before the fallen for Thy sake.

Let me have comrades, bound to Thee
By a yet deeper fealty;
And coffers full that I may pour
Down at Thy feet their glittering store;
And may I dig from duskiest mine
The ore wherewith to gild Thy shrine.

Be mine the wisdom, Lord, to see
What counsel best may honour Thee;
Like adamant my will, O Lord,
Yet bending reed-like to Thy word;
And may my voice like music sway
My people's hearts to walk Thy way.

Grant me Thy fires of woe, to prove
And cleanse from earthly dross my love;
Grant me delights, which I for Thee
May joy to spurn, if need shall be;
Grant me unperishing renown,
That I may bind it to Thy crown.

THINKING AND DOING.

BACK from the drear illimitable ocean,
  Back from the restless transitory foam,
Yearnings vague of purposeless emotion,
  Driftings never drawing nearer home,
Ebb and flow of waters which receding
  Leave no blessing on the thirsty sand,
Clash of breakers passionately pleading
  Against the rock which bars them from the land.

Vain, all vain! To-day becomes to-morrow,
  And to-morrow as to-day shall be:
Moans of an inextinguishable sorrow,
  Day and night upswelling from the sea.

Or if at times a voice of jubilation
  Swells from the heaving bosom of the deep,
'Tis only when the waves in desolation
  Over the argosies of nations sweep.

Why thus near the barren waters linger,
  Lured by the sea-bird's solitary wail,
Watching the sun with slowly sinking finger
  Streaking a glory on yon fading sail?
Wave on wave in ceaseless revolution
  Chants to the winds its joyless, hopeless creed,
Questionings which never find solution,
  Doubts which never issue into deed.

Back to the plains whereon the harvest daily
  Waves back a richer welcome to the sun;
Wherefrom the bird of dawn upsoaring gaily
  Sings of the triumph which the light has won;

Sings how the germs of life, and strength, and beauty
  Day by day are quickened in the soil,
Sings how the everlasting law of duty
  Blesses the earth and consecrates our toil.

REQUIEM.

Chanting loudly, chanting lowly,
Pacing ever softly, slowly,
Round about the precincts holy,
Bear him to his rest.

Measured march and solemn singing
Heavenward the heart are winging,
Even while the hand is flinging
Dust upon his breast.

For they tell of warfare ended,
Of a banner bravely tended,
Of a post till death defended,
Though the foe was strong.

Therefore o'er the mourners wailing
Swells the strain which, never-failing,
Speaks of loyalty unquailing
As we move along.

Sword or casque where he is lying,
Trophy torn from foemen flying,
Gleams not, yet, without denying,
He whom we deplore

Strove, as warriors have striven,
Till the ranks of hell were riven,
And the word at last was given,
'Rest for evermore.'

HARVEST HOME.

O SUN, haste not to set,
Fast verging to the west,
But bid thy panting steeds a while to rest,
That vainly chafe and fret;

Ere down the final steep
Thy car more swiftly roll,
Poised on the brink they burn to touch their goal,
The blue translucent deep.

Yet pause to bless, to-day,
The revels which we hold,
Where on the green hillside and spreading wold
Lingers thy level ray.

Bright as the sky o'erhead,
The hours in sport employed;
But all without thy smile is cold and void,
All fashionless and dead.

Glad shouts are ringing still
Afar with softened din
Along the valley's fading tints, or in
The hollows of the hill.

The gay unwonted sounds
Claim as of right a part
In nature's soft embrace, and all her heart
To merry music bounds.

For 'tis their feast to-day,
Whose sombre lives are flecked
Not oft with gleams of joy, nor often decked
With gauds of holiday.

Therefore the gentle earth,
In guerdon of their toil,
Whose patient ministerings tend her soil,
Is merry with their mirth.

But, lo, the sun, as flies
From war a wounded king,
Hies fast with clouds, a gorgeous following,
Mourning because he dies.

Tall shadows, dim and pale,
From every ridge troop down,
The revel dies upon the mountain's crown,
Dies in the silent vale.

O! sun that sinks too fast!
O! hues too swiftly gone!
O! friends that cheer our path, then leave it lone
And joyless at the last!

A futile grasp we lay
On joys fast fleeting by,
Seen fairest as they fade, like strains that die
In raptured thrills away.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] queen

[illegible]

[illegible] wand

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] like a bird

That has never been caged or tamed,

But ranges at will

By thicket and rill

With a freedom unchecked, unblamed.

Like a thing that would soar and fly

If only it had but wings,

For the heart's own light

Makes all things bright

To a maiden of twenty springs.

TO ——.

My homeward way is ended,
The last green slope ascended,
Slow pacing, unattended,
    I rest and turn to see

The valley softly smiling,
As though with tenderest wiling
My wistful thoughts beguiling
    Awhile away from thee.

Now steals the calm of even
Adown the cloudless heaven,
Like rest, when men have striven
    Until the victory.

Like rest of souls reposing,
When life's long strife is closing,
And the foe our march opposing
At last is forced to flee.

O fair beyond denying
The scene before me lying,
Yet wins it no replying
Of fond delight from me.

A purple glow is steeping
The hills around me sleeping,
But I my watch am keeping
Alone away from thee.

AFTER THE BATTLE.

When night is softly spreading
Her pall on the crimsoned plain,
With treadings slow and whisperings low
Men sadly count the slain.
But none can say who bore him
The foremost in the fray,
Of all who vied for the right and died
Throughout the hard-won day.

Ere yet the bird of carnage,
Down swooping from afar,
With ruthless beak has seamed the cheek
Which the sword had spared to scar;

And there one lies whose prowess
Was lightly priced of men;
Yet undismayed methinks he played
True part of hero then.

Where the cloud of war was riven
By the cannon's fiery breath,
He plunged as one who leaps alone
Adown the jaws of death.
The smoke that veiled his daring,
Upraised, unshrouds him now;
But few will grieve, and none will weave
A garland for his brow.

Lo! yonder one is lying,
As faithless to his post,
Swept backward far by the rush of war,
His ground of vantage lost.

Yet, pause before thou blamest
Thou wert not by to see
How like a rock he faced the shock
Till whelmed beneath the sea.

Thou saw'st him not, sore wounded,
Holding a host at bay—
One knee aground—fierce foemen round—
All succour far away.
He clutched his tattered banner,
Bloodstreaked in every fold,
Nor till with life had ceased the strife
Relaxed his faltering hold.

Only the Prince, the Leader,
From yon far-seeing hill
Can read aright the ravelled fight
With eye serene and still.

To the true who bear them bravely,
To the false who turn and fly,
A righteous meed He has decreed
For they fight beneath His eye.

Himself has borne the burden,
Which still His soldiers bear,
Himself alone, as none have done,
Has battled with despair.
He knows the flesh how feeble,
Although the spirit strong;
Knows well how keen the strife has been,
When Hell's dark legions throng.

Then judge not thou the fallen
On life's red battle-plain!
With bated breath, in sight of death,
Tread softly 'mid the slain.

Not thine to mete the guerdon,
The doom, that each has won;
For each and all shall stand or fall
Before their Leader's throne.

WILD THYME.

TO MY BROTHER.

WHAT bring we from the Lakes? A sprig of heather,
Which was old Skiddaw's pride,
And these tall plumes of fern which waved together,
Brushing the red deer's side
On Glencoin's slope? Nay, while we look and sigh,
Behold, they die.

Yet not the less a thymy perfume lingers
Floating around the heart,
And though the fronds may wither in our fingers,
Yet memory's magic art
Sees far away the glade wherein they grew
Amid the dew.

I see the purple shadows of the mountains
Striding across the dale;
I hear the solemn vespers of the fountains
Wafted adown the vale;
And all my spirit thither hastes to be
A wanderer free.

Again with thee I scale the trackless passes
Where sound or stir is none,
And clamber over huge Titanic masses,
Relics of ages gone;
O blissful toil, nor yet less truly blest
The hard-won rest.

O joy, ere having gained some cloudcapt summit,
To dart one glance below,
Deeper than mariner may drop his plummet,
Where shoreless waters flow,
While air-borne voices whisper 'Naught is done
Till all be won.'

O brother, when the days are dull and dreary
Amid a careworn throng,
And day by day the spirit grows more weary,
O then to make us strong,
The mountains in their glory shall arise
Before our eyes,

And we shall quaff the air which circles round them,
Elixir pure and bright,
And we shall see them o'er the mists which bound them
Still struggling to the light,
And loud above the city's din shall soar
The torrent's roar.

Think, 'mid the strife of tongues and angry vying
For money and for place,
Think how we saw the mirrored mountains lying
In Grasmere's soft embrace,
Like monarchs who have laid their pomp aside
And kingly pride.

Seems it not now that we were standing lately,
Although we knew it not,
Within the precincts of a minster stately,
A consecrated spot,
Of which the holy calm, go where we will,
Enfolds us still ?

LOBGESANG.

I.

THE armies of the Lord,
The beautiful, the terrible, the strong,
Ride swiftly on the winds, a lordly throng,
Avengers of His Word.

I see them not go by;
Too keen their flashings for my care-dimmed sight;
But all that is on earth of purest light
Streams from their panoply.

Alas! too dull mine ear
To mark how thick their surging pinions throng;
Yet birds in every grove lift up a song,
Because they feel them near.

And every flower that springs
In dells far hidden from all mortal view,
Holds up its tiny cup to catch the dew
Which trickles from their wings.

Their shout of triumph thrills
The universe, and while the ages last
Is echoed from the dim Titanic past
Like thunder round the hills.

The ever-rolling spheres
Move to the harping of their harps, which falls
Earthward from heaven's high adamantine walls
Across the gulf of years.

II.

The armies of the Lord,
The white-robed singers sworn to praise His name
Unrestingly, till He whom they proclaim
By all shall be adored.

Hark to their martial strain!
They sing of One, their Leader, who defied
For them Hell's depths of horror, and who died
That they with Him might reign.

There is no clash of steel,
Nor march their serried ranks as those who wield
Sabre or spear on some great battle-field,
When war's alarums peal.

Yet all the powers of Hell
Tremble amid their darkness at the word
Which issues from their lips, and is a sword
Two-edged, invisible.

Is it not written how
A boyish minstrel's harpings soft and clear
Chased the dark spirit from a monarch's ear,
And smoothed his frenzied brow?

And how the dungeon's wall
Quaked as a leaf when storm-winds rend the bower,
While swelled the psalm in the midnight hour
Of Silas and of Paul?

Then fling the portals wide
Which front the west, and let the level rays
Flood the old minster with a golden haze,
Till all be glorified:

While blended voices raise,
Faint echo to the song of triumph high
For ever circling round the starry sky,
Earth's noblest songs of praise.

WILL.

If but my will
Against the powers of Hell
Uphold its banner well,
Nor when the strife of passions rages drear,
Though scantily equipped with bow and spear,
Flinch from its post in ignominious fear,
I am the victor still.

For 'tis the will
Firm seated on its throne,
Monarch, supreme, alone,
Which sways our being as the hands which sway
The rudder, where the vessel cleaves the spray,
Or those whose touch responsive chords obey
When the ear drinks its fill.

All else may die:
This tenement of clay
May crumble and decay
With all the frailties, its joy and pride,
As wasts a maiden, soon to be a bride,
Her girlish toys, her broken lyre aside,
Because her lord is nigh.

This, this alone,
Still, still to choose the good
Through every fleeting mood
Which flings its shadows o'er our destiny,
Like clouds which sail across an April sky;
This, this is life and immortality,
Though sense and thought be gone.

THE FIRST DEATH.

SOFTLY, softly, the snow-flakes fall
Winding the earth in a seamless pall,
Like lilies strewn without a sound
By mourners mutely standing round,
To fold in holiest peace the bier
Whereon is laid the dying year.

Slowly, slowly, the earth is drest
In the spotless robe she loves the best,
When hushed and motionless she lies
To catch the song which thrills the skies,
Glad tidings yearly newly given
Of peace on earth and joy in heaven.

Softly, slowly, fades away
The babe's sweet spirit day by day;
Though loth to leave us mourning all,
It may not stay, for angels call;
Thus robed in innocence he lies
Bedecked aright for Paradise.

EDEN.

FAR, far away amid the giant mountains,
  Safe as a jewel casketed in gold,
Soothed by the music of the fourfold fountains
  Lies the fair garden loved and lost of old.

There with the lisp of children softly blending,
  Fraught with a deeper meaning than they know,
Old and yet new for ever are ascending
  Echoings from the ages long ago.

There the sweet chime from out the belfry swinging
  Sounds as a call to mortals from the sky:
There the loud chant from out the minster ringing
  Swells as the march of angels passing by.

There the deep booming of the organ's thunder
  Is as a trembling beneath God's throne;
There the dim haunts of legendary wonder
  Waken no sighing for a something gone.

Storm never rends the blossom from the branches,
  Canker eats not the sweetness at its core;
Nor ever there the crash of avalanches
  Shatters, as here, the daydream with its roar.

There never die the dews that gem the morning,
  Quenched by the fierceness of the noontide ray;
There never spring bereaved of her adorning
  Weeps to behold her blossoms pass away.

Hope has not learned in that bright land to falter,
  Never as yet deceiving or deceived;
For not as yet the soul has learned to palter
  With the high calling which it has received.

O! man, this Eden, lost of old, is nigh thee,
  Nigh thee, though far away, this garden fair.
Legions of Hell may gather to defy thee,
  But thou art safe if only thou art there.

For a stern warder panoplied in glory
  Stands at the portals of this hallowed spot.
Blest and thrice blest—it is a world-old story—
  Those are who dwell there though they know it
    not.

IS IT WELL WITH THE CHILD? IT IS WELL.

SURELY 'tis well those tender feet beneath the scorching ray
Of life's fierce sun shall never toil along the dusty way;
Yet oh! for the little twinkling feet which sped so fast and free,
Across the dewy lawn at eve so oft to welcome me.

Surely 'tis well that never in life's labyrinthine ways
That little hand shall risk to lose the thread amid the maze;
Yet oh! for the tiny hand in mine with its pressure soft and warm,
To mind me that it was my charge to shield my child from harm.

Surely 'tis well that never shall his spirit be perplexed
With doubts and questionings whereby the soul of man is vexed;
Yet oh! for the whispered questionings so strangely deep and wise,
Too wise, we thought, for childish lips, of things beyond the skies.

Surely 'tis well that never now sore-wounded in the fray
The soul shall need with sigh and sob to weep its woes away;
Yet oh! for but one look, though sad, of the loving wistful eyes,
Which closed awhile ago on earth to wake in Paradise.

Surely 'tis well for him who rests; nor ill for us who
stay
To bear for some short space the heat and burden of
the day;
For we hear a still soft voice which calls from out the
grassy mound,
And we see a tiny hand which leads where only rest
is found.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

Oft have I seen in the gloaming,
  There by the gate of the fold,
Telling his lambs that were roaming,
  Telling till each one is told,
    Him, the good shepherd, who dwells
    Out in the mist on the fells.

And I have thought, while from heaven
  Softly down trickles the dew,
While the sweet planet of even
  Silvers the grey and the blue,
    Often have thought upon One
    Waiting and watching alone ;—

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Waiting for souls that are straying
Watching for souls that would stray,
Lonely as one who is praying
Sadly for friends far away,
Lonely, for no one has known
All that He seeks for His own.

Others may love, but in others
Love ever waxes and wanes;
Others may pity, but others
Bring not relief to our pains:
His is the love which can save
Even from the jaws of the grave.

Pierced are His palms. Oh! behold Him!
Bleeding his feet and his side.
See how the robes which enfold Him
Stains as of crimson have dyed:
These are the wounds which it cost
Daring to rescue the lost.

And He has traversed the mountains,
  Bearing the heat of the day;
Leading His flock to the fountains,
  Chasing the prowler away;
    Far has He travelled since morn—
    See, He is weary and worn.

Silent He stands in the gloaming,
  Guarding the gate of His fold;
Sighing for those that are roaming,
  Telling till each one is told.
    Pale is His brow—and His eye
    Sad as yon planet on high.

Pale is His brow, but a glory
  Circles it round; and behold,
Under His vesture so gory
  Gleams as of purple and gold,
    As of a King who has borne
    Shame for His people and scorn.

HOPE AND MEMORY.

Comes at times a stillness as of even,
  Steeping the soul in memories of love,
As when the glow is fading out of heaven,
  As when the twilight deepens in the grove.
Comes at times a sound of many voices,
  As when the waves are breaking on the shore,
As when each dewy bush and brake rejoices,
  Chanting aloud because the night is o'er.

Comes at times a voice of days departed,
  On the dying breath of evening borne,
Whispering sadly to the weary-hearted,
  'Long is the way before thee and forlorn.'

Comes at last a voice of thrilling gladness,
  Borne on the breezes of the rising day—
Saying, 'The Lord will make an end of sadness;'
  Saying, 'The Lord will wipe all tears away.'

ANNIE GREY.

Sweet Annie Grey is just like a spring morning,
Now with a dimple and now with a frown;
Smiling at times and at other times scorning,
See, how she tosses her tresses of brown!
Streaming and gleaming and soft as the down,
See how she tosses her tresses of brown!

Sweet Annie Grey, shall I tell you my thinking?
And will you list as is fitting and wise?
For from the truth it is vain to be shrinking—
See, what a wonderment beams in her eyes!
Asking and masking and blue as the skies,
See, what a wonderment beams in her eyes!

Sweet Annie Grey, must I love you and leave you?
  Nay, but I care not for loving in part;
Were it not better—oh! why should it grieve you?
  Could you but give me the whole of your heart?
See how she hears with a blush and a start!
Annie, sweet Annie, the whole of your heart?

TO ——.

ARCHING a snow-white neck,
Crisping a snow-white wing,
Is it in anger, or pride, or because
So lovely a thing
Plumes itself thus on its loveliness, and
Loves to be loved, and is born to command?

Lady! say was it a tone
Somewhat deficient in awe
Jarred on thy sensitive hearing, and thus
Constrained thee to draw,
As with a grave and reproving surprise,
Haughtily back from inquisitive eyes?

Lady! if haply 'twas I
Ruffled the swanlike repose,
Mantled in which thou wert floating along,
I was but as those
Dreamers, who start from their dreamings and wake
Standing and watching a swan on a lake.

SEDAN.

[illegible], fallen, fallen! Not alone
[illegible] by the fireboit from thy tottering throne,
[illegible] stained with blood of myriads in thy fall—
[illegible] the roar of voices wild and drear
[illegible] thy wail of anguish smites the ear,
'[illegible] for my child I risked and ruined all!'

[illegible] a month ago—and who so great?
Whose voice so potent in the world's debate,
With half a million muskets at thy nod?
The old, old tale that earthly hopes are vain
[illegible] in thy downfall to grow young again,
The trite old truth that man cannot be God.

And woe for France! In wantonness of pride
Crushed to the dust, yet scattering far and wide
  Blind aimless blows in impotence of rage!
Yet o'er the crash of empires and the doom
Of dynasties, like life from out the tomb,
  Dawns dim the advent of a happier age.

NUPAKU.

THREE sister spires together rise,
  Where Trent flows peacefully along,
And there, when daylight fades and dies,
  Floats up the sound of evensong;
And knees are bent and heads are bowed,
As the great organ peals aloud.

Dear England! where the changeless past
  Blends with the ever-shifting now;
Where old traditions live and last,
  Old and yet new, we know not how;
And where, whatever change may come,
Still sways all hearts the thought of home.

But we, this dim November eve,
  In thought are roaming far away
To isles, where sunlit waters weave
  Round each a fringe of glittering spray;
For English hearts and English hands
Have borne the cross to those far lands.

And there, on yon far shore, he lies,
  The leader of that hero band,
With none to close his glazing eyes,
  With none to clasp his stiffening hand—
For others' sin a victim made,
And slain by those he came to aid.

O! loyal-hearted, brave as wise,
  The same in thy reproachless youth,
As under Polynesian skies,
  In grave simplicity of truth—
O! loved and loving! who shall weep
That thou art fallen thus asleep?

Yes! even he who mourns to-day,
  As mourns a father for his son,
Who led him in the glorious fray,
  Wherein the Martyr's Crown was won,
E'en he can say, with streaming eyes,
'How should we wish it otherwise.'

The days of Martyrs are not gone,
  Still beats there many a heart, whose prayer
Is daily this—to labour on
  Without reward—to do and dare
For those who suffer—and whose cry,
Is this—for them to live, to die.

No minster towers above thy grave—
  No choral dirge swells slowly by—
Nought but the weltering of the wave,
  O'er which thy bark was wont to hie,
Proclaims thee to the wandering breeze,
Apostle of those southern seas.

EPILOGUE.

I BOWED my knee to Poesy and prayed,
  Give me a perfect mind.
I cannot give that which I lack, she said,
  I seek but may not find.

I prayed: Yet may thy suppliant attain
  Somewhat of all thy lore,
Catching if but faint echo of the strain
  Which they who hear adore.

On yon green bank, she said, the fairy bells
  Ring out no chime for thee,
To thee no swallow twitters his farewells
  Before he skims the sea.

Yet while she spake, as scorning not my prayer,
  Her breath was in my ear,
And on my cheek the waving of her hair.
  I turned—she was not near.

[illegible]